

some steps towards reducing the cost of interest rates under the Stafford Student Loan program, but for many teachers, the challenge of paying for higher education costs, in Connecticut the average salary for Head Start teachers is \$24,000, and the Sestak amendment goes right to the heart of trying to make this new requirement affordable. I believe it is totally germane and central to the intent of this Head Start reauthorization bill. This amendment belongs there, and I strongly urge the Members to support passage of the Sestak amendment.

I want to thank Congressman SESTAK for offering this important amendment today. It would provide concrete assistance for early childhood educators in Connecticut and around the country to attain their bachelors degree. As you know, the Head Start bill before us increases teacher qualifications—half of teachers nationwide have a BA by 2013 and all new teachers have at least an associate's degree beginning in 2009.

This amendment also provides a strong incentive for students to enter the field and for established early childhood educators to remain in the field. Loan forgiveness of up to \$10,000 is contingent upon at least 3 years service in a Head Start facility. Too often, our best and brightest educators are forced out of the profession because the salaries cannot keep up with individual and family economic demands.

In Connecticut, where the median Head Start salary is approximately \$24,000, going back to school to attain a higher degree to satisfy the new teacher qualification requirements would be an economic hardship.

While I am pleased to say that Connecticut met the national goal of having at least 50 percent or more of its teachers having an associate's degree in early childhood education by the year 2003, the financial burden to now attain a bachelor's degree will be high.

We all know that college costs are rising and the last thing we want to do is encourage more debt. That is why I am so supportive of this amendment.

The need for committed, enthusiastic, and qualified Head Start teachers is on the rise. In Connecticut, there are more than 25 Centers serving more than 8,000 children. Poverty levels in many parts of the state are rising. Children receive valuable educational enrichment in Head Start programs, ensuring that they are on the path to educational success in elementary school and beyond. We cannot afford to leave children unprepared and we cannot afford to lose our best and talented teachers either.

This amendment provides the incentive to enter or remain in the early childhood education field and I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. SESTAK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Chairman, we must ensure that every child who could benefit from Head Start is able to enroll in a Head Start center. One way to do that is to provide full funding; another is to provide that we have the facilities we need; and, one of the most important ways is to ensure that we have qualified teachers.

The base bill increases the requests and requirements for teacher qualification, and it supports higher salaries and requires more college degrees. Therefore, including this amendment in the Head Start bill is absolutely appropriate, because this amendment helps Head Start teachers get the degrees that we are demanding that they have. And we do this by offering loan forgiveness to those teachers, teachers who teach in the Head Start programs. Loan forgiveness will help balance out low salaries, and it will assist with teacher retention.

Head Start is about the best thing we can do for our children, because this successful program gives children from all backgrounds a level playing field when they enter elementary school.

Mr. SESTAK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

It has been suggested that we put this in the Higher Education bill, but the Higher Education bill has been kind of stalled. And I always believe you put your cargo on the train that is moving, and this train is moving.

The Senate reported its version out of committee. I think we have a much better chance to get this done if we put it on this bill. This train is moving.

Mr. SESTAK. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SESTAK).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chairman announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. HIRONO

The Acting CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 110-116.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 4 offered by Ms. HIRONO:

Beginning on page 124, strike line 8 and all that follows through line 9 on page 126, and insert the following:

“(g) MONITORING, TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND EVALUATION.—

“(1) REQUIREMENT.—To ensure the successful operation of programs assisted under this section, the Secretary shall use funds from the portion specified in section 640(a)(6) to monitor the operation of such programs, evaluate their effectiveness, and provide training and technical assistance tailored to the particular needs of such programs.

“(2) TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACCOUNT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Of the amount made available to carry out this section for any fiscal year, not less than 5 percent, and not

more than 10 percent, shall be reserved to fund a training and technical assistance account. In determining the amount so reserved, the Secretary shall consider the number of new programs serving pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and their families, recognizing their need for more intensive training and technical assistance services during program expansion.

“(B) ACTIVITIES.—Of the funds in the account described in subparagraph (A)

“(I) not less than 50 percent shall be available to local entities that carry out Early Head Start programs for training and technical assistance activities in order to make program improvements identified by such entities;

“(ii) not less than 30 percent shall be available to the Secretary to support a State-based system of early childhood education training and technical assistance to local entities that carry out Early Head Start programs that shall meet the requirements of subparagraph (C), including the creation, management, and support of a national network of the State-based infant-toddler specialists specified in such subparagraph; and

“(iii) the remainder of such amount shall be available to the Secretary to assist local entities that carry out Early Head Start programs in meeting and exceeding the standards described in section 641A(a)(1), including—

“(I) making grants to, and entering into contracts with, organizations with specialized expertise relating to infants, toddlers, and families and the capacity needed to provide direction and support to a national training and technical assistance system, in order to provide such direction and support;

“(II) providing ongoing training and technical assistance on Early Head Start program development and improvement for regional staff charged with monitoring and overseeing the administration of the program carried out under this section;

“(III) developing training and technical assistance materials and resources to support program development and improvement and best practices in providing services to children and families served by Early Head Start programs;

“(IV) creating special training and technical assistance initiatives targeted to serving high risk populations, such as children in the child welfare system and homeless children;

“(V) providing ongoing training and technical assistance to Early Head Start grantees, and support and program planning and implementation assistance for new recipients of such grants, including the conversion of Head Start grants to Early Head Start grants; and

“(VI) providing professional development designed to increase program participation for underserved populations of eligible children.

“(C) CONTRACTS.—For the purposes of delivering a State-based training and technical assistance system, as described in subparagraph (B)(ii), that will meet the needs of local grantees and provide high quality, sustained, and intensive training and technical assistance on programming for infants and toddlers to Early Head Start programs and in order to help such programs meet or exceed the program performance standards described in section 641A(a)(1), the Secretary shall—

“(i) enter into contracts in each State with 1 or more entities that have a demonstrated expertise in supporting the delivery of high quality programs for pregnant women and children less than 3 years of age, except that bi-State or multi-State contracts may be entered into if the demographics of proximal